

**Office of the Attorney General (OAG)
Access & Visitation Grant (Shared Parenting Program) Request for Applications (Due
May 10, 2010)**

The Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement Strategic Plan Vision Statement and Guiding Principles emphasize the importance of parents providing both financial *and emotional* support to their children. The OAG's Child Support Division echoes this same philosophical approach and highlights our support for the emotional connection between parents and their children through the OAG Access and Visitation Program—now known as the OAG Shared Parenting Program. The Child Support Division (CSD) of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) is soliciting applications for projects under the Access & Visitation Grant (Shared Parenting Program).

Under 42 U.S.C. 669b, the Federal Government provides to states grants for Access and Visitation (A&V) programs. These grants may be used to establish and administer programs to support and facilitate noncustodial parents' access to and visitation with their children. Eligible activities include:

- mediation,
- counseling,
- education,
- development of parenting plans, and
- visitation enforcement.

Projects funded under this program do not have to be statewide. Entities eligible for funding include: courts, local government or other public entities, and private nonprofit organizations with a minimum of two years operating history. Matching funds (cash or in-kind) of at least 10% are required. Throughout the entity's public education materials, web and social media sites, and any media or public comments, the entity must demonstrate a consistent message of cooperative parenting without any bias toward either parent or set of parents. State funds or other funding may be used to expand the federal Access and Visitation Program.

Local Shared Parenting Programs (SPP) Priorities:

Preference will be given to those proposals emphasizing Texas' priorities for the SPP grant: early intervention, co-parenting education; alternative dispute resolution services, and visitation enforcement programs offering parents with cases in the IV-D child support program legal, educational, and case management assistance in achieving compliance with parenting time (possession) orders. These priorities include a target population of forming families within the IV-D child support program. A forming family, also called a fragile family, consists of low-income, unmarried parents who share a child, and are at high risk of family dissolution. Applicants are encouraged to address in detail the particular issues of never-married couples. Approximately 65% of the OAG caseload includes parents who were not married at the birth of their child. The Shared Parenting Program emphasizes co-parenting education, social services, and mediation services for never-married noncustodial parents and former partners with child support cases in the IV-D agency (OAG). Applicants should define how their proposals would reach underserved populations. Proposals must include methodology that will be used to report outcomes of proposed services on noncustodial parenting time.

Funding Terms

Contract awards for State Fiscal Year 2011 will be from September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011. Contract awards for State Fiscal Year 2012 will be from September 1, 2011 to August 31, 2012. Contractors successfully performing program services may be eligible for an extension of funding through State Fiscal Year 2012, based on performance and availability of funds. The OAG anticipates awarding approximately 10 grants ranging from \$14,000 to \$80,000.

Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. CST May 10, 2010. Applications and/or attachments received after the deadline will not be considered.

Applications may be submitted 1 of 2 ways. Do NOT use US Postal Service.

1. By Federal Express or by United Parcel Service (UPS):

Office of the Attorney General
Family Initiatives, Child Support Division
5500 E. Oltorf Street, MC 039
Austin, TX 78741

This office CANNOT accept United States Postal Service deliveries.

2. By email to:

OFI.Grants@cs.oag.state.tx.us; cc: michael.hayes@cs.oag.state.tx.us.

1. Email application as a:
 - a. read only file (with electronic signature); **or**
 - b. single PDF file.

Include all Attachments (FY11 and FY12 budgets and Performance Indicators, letter of cooperation with the local child support office (not applicable for Hotline applications), support letters, etc.) **Contact** the *office manager at your local child support office* (Regional Office Manager if you serve many counties) for the letter of cooperation.

2. Print out your sent email and retain for your files—this is proof of timely submission in the event of server problems.

A letter of intent must be submitted on the Texas OAG Website <http://www.oag.state.tx.us/cs/ofc/index.shtml> prior to the application deadline. Once submitted, a complete application packet may be downloaded.

Email questions about this application process by **April 23, 2010**, to:

Michael Hayes
michael.hayes@cs.oag.state.tx.us

Check the Frequently Asked Questions section on this site for answers within 2 business days.